

Fire Prevention Week, October 8 - 14, 1995.

Carbon Monoxide: Tips to detect this deadly gas

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless, deadly gas that can be released by common household appliances.

It kills dozens of Canadians each year and injures many more. Many of the killed or injured are asleep at the time of exposure. Carbon monoxide does not wake you; it puts you into a deeper sleep, and prolonged exposure can lead to brain damage, and ultimately, death.

The long, cold Canadian winters increase the threat of carbon monoxide poisoning because heating appliances are a major source of the deadly gas.

Carbon monoxide is known as the great imitator because low levels of exposure can mimic flu or food poisoning symptoms ranging from headaches and nausea to dizziness and fatigue.

Misdiagnosis can leave a person unwittingly in a hazardous environment.

The deadly gases can leak into the home because of incomplete combustion when a fuel-burning device is poorly maintained, improperly vented or simply breaks down.

Any appliance or heating device in the home that runs on a combustible fuel, such as gas, oil, kerosene, wood or charcoal is capable of causing a carbon monoxide problem. Additionally, a car left running in an attached garage can leak deadly gases into the home.

Other potential sources include clogged or blocked chimney openings, inadequate venting of appliances, malfunctioning propane refrigerators, and operating a barbecue in an enclosed area. Many of the accidental deaths caused by carbon monoxide are the result of such accidents in the home. Modern, energy efficient homes which trap heat can also add to the threat of poisoning, by trapping carbon monoxide.

You can't see or smell carbon monoxide, so there is no way to prevent injuries or death without a reliable detection device. The Carbon Monoxide Detector is a new device that looks very much like a smoke alarm. If the alarm sounds, ventilate your home immediately by opening doors and windows. Then, check to see if anyone in your home is experiencing the adverse effects of CO poisoning - headache, dizziness, nausea or other flu-like symptoms. If anyone in the house has any symptoms, call the fire department and evacuate the

house. If no one is experiencing these symptoms, continue ventilating your home, and turn off all fuel-burning appliances and call a qualified technician to inspect and repair the problem. Never ignore a CO detector that has alarmed. It is recommended that each residence be equipped with at least one carbon monoxide detector located near the sleeping area.

There are several health-related clues that will alert you to the possibility that you are experiencing carbon monoxide poisoning. They are:

- dizziness, blurred vision
- nausea and vomiting
- confusion, disorientation, loss of muscle control
- sleepiness, but never feeling rested
- rapid heart beat, pulse, or a tightening of the chest
- chest pain (angina) when exercising
- fainting, unconsciousness
- feeling sick and tired at home, but fine once you leave the house

If you experience any one or a combination of these symptoms you should have your house checked for the presence of CO.



watch what you heat!

prevent home fires
fire prevention week
October 8-14 1995

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Harvest Fest fun in making

FESTIVAL A FAMILY AFFAIR
This year's Harvest Fest in downtown Stouffville Oct. 14 promises to be a great outing for the whole family. Main Street will be closed to traffic all day Saturday and the Ballantyne Lions will host a pancake breakfast in the library parking lot. Residents are invited to take part in the scarecrow contest and parade, with prizes in five age categories to be awarded to the most creatively dressed entrants. Categories will cover tots to teens and there will be a special category for the best family group.

Participants are asked to assemble at the corner of Main St. and O'Brien Ave. at 8:45 a.m. for judging. The parade, led by the old fire truck, will take place after the contest, starting at approximately 9:30 a.m. Other events include a gourd decorating contest, a pumpkin carving contest, face painting by Pepper the Clown and musical entertainment for all the family. Featured artists include Grant Fullerton, the Thrill Kings and Amanda Lee.

HOSPICE WEEK Hospice Markham-Stouffville will join more than 70 hospices in Ontario celebrating the second annual



Hospice Awareness Week Oct. 16-22. Among planned local events is a public forum at 7:30 p.m. at Parkview Village Auditorium Oct. 18, sponsored by hospice, with Markham-Stouffville Hospital and Perinatal Bereavement Support Services of Ontario.

The guest speaker will be Dr. Bill Webster, author, lecturer and director of The Centre for the Grief Journey, and his topic will be Good Grief: Understanding What It's All About.

The free event will provide support and information for anyone who has suffered a loss, and will also be of interest to health care professionals and the general public. In 1994, 110 families benefited from practical and emotional support supplied by the organization.

At present, the hospice is providing grief and bereavement support for more than 80 families for one year following the death of a loved one. For more information on the forum or on becoming a hospice volunteer, call 905-472-5014.

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